

The National Estuary Program was established in 1987 by amendments to the Clean Water Act to identify, restore, and protect nationally significant estuaries of the United States. Unlike traditional regulatory approaches to environmental protection, the NEP targets a broad range of issues and engages local communities in the process. The program focuses not just on improving water quality in an estuary, but on maintaining the integrity of the whole system — its chemical, physical, and biological properties, as well as its economic, recreational, and aesthetic values.

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Fact Sheet/March 2000

# Buzzards Bay



Photo: Nancy Garfield (Dartmouth, MA Padanaram Harbor. Aug. 8, 1981)

## What Makes the Buzzards Bay Estuary Special?

- The Bay was designated an Estuary of National Significance in 1987.
- It contains over 10,000 acres of salt marshes and tidal flats and it represents over 25% of the value of the state's commercial shellfish catch.
- One of the Bay State's major recreational areas for boating, swimming and shellfishing.

## Why Does the Buzzards Bay Estuary Need Special Attention?

- Parts of the Bay currently exceed critical nitrogen loading limits and are negatively impacted by sewage treatment plants, stormwater runoff, septic systems and waste water discharges from boats.

## The Long Term Goal

- Restore an additional 1,000 acres of shellfish beds by the year 2005 and preserve all high quality areas from degradation.



## Progress/Goals for the Future

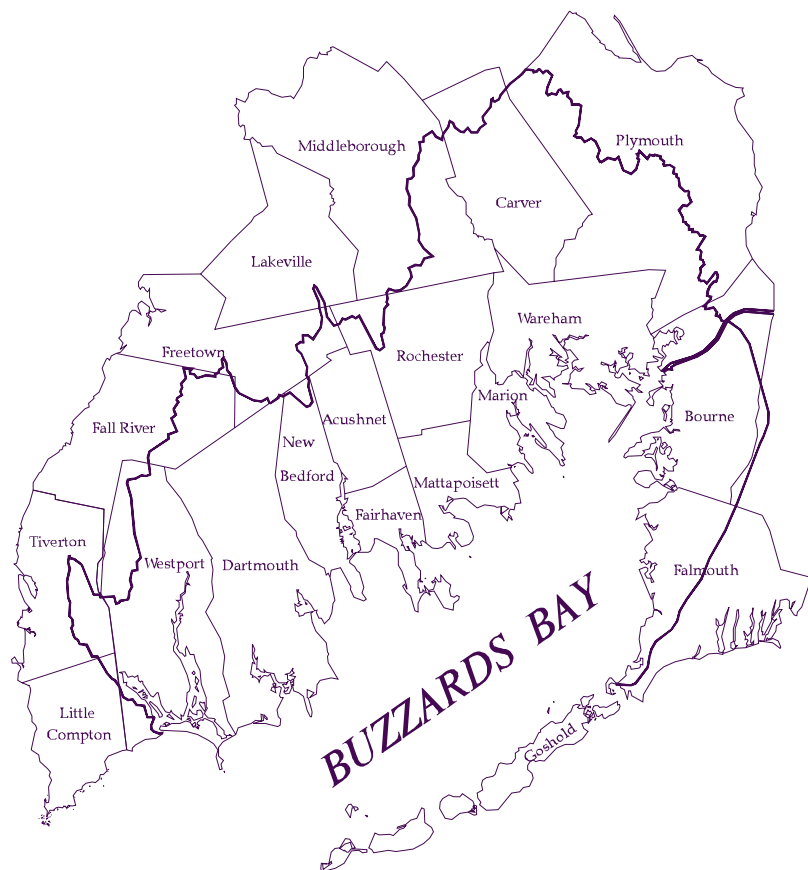
### What Partnership Progress Has Been Made?

- EPA designated Buzzards Bay the pilot area for assessing water quality impacts from concentrated animal feeding operations.
- The Coalition for Buzzards Bay published six years of water quality data that was gathered through the Citizens' Water Quality Monitoring Program.
- Establishment of the Buzzards Bay Land Trust Network to promote conservation through the acquisition of open space and other methods.
- The Buzzards Bay Project completed open space and recreation plans for six municipalities.
- EPA provided funding to complete stormwater treatment systems in Wareham and Bourne.

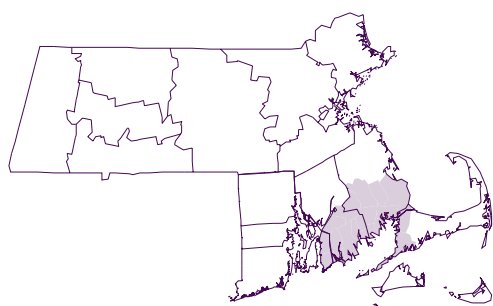
### What Are the Actions Planned for 2000?

- The Alternative Septic System Test Center will monitor 10 wastewater technologies to verify pollutant removal beyond the standard systems used in MA today. As a result, vendors will be able to get their products to market quicker.
- At Pimental Farm, best management practices and a comprehensive nutrient management plan will be implemented, resulting in no discharge of manure to Snell Creek and the Westport River.
- Reduce bacterial loading to Snell Creek by 75%.
- EPA hopes to designate Buzzards Bay a "No Discharge Zone" for boats.

# Buzzards Bay



— Town Line  
- - - Basin Boundary



Locus Map



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## Who Are the Partners?

EPA-New England • MA Coastal Zone Management Office • Coalition for Buzzards Bay • Buzzards Bay Action Committee • Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District

## ► Buzzards Bay Project Contact

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Note: EPA-New England offers businesses and municipalities information and assistance to improve compliance with environmental laws and be better stewards of their local environment. Please call to learn how EPA can help.